LONDON’S ELIAS STRING QUARTET BRINGS AFTERNOON OF BEETHOVEN TO JORGENSEN

Sun, Nov 15, 2015 at 3:00 pm / Concert Talk at 2:15 pm

With a musicality hailed as “spectacular” by The Washington Post, “stunning” by The Philadelphia Inquirer, and “pure magic” by London’s Sunday Telegraph, UK’s highly acclaimed Elias String Quartet will take the stage at UConn’s Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts on Sunday, November 15th for a stirring performance of chamber works for string quartet by German composer Ludwig van Beethoven. The concert will begin at 3:00 pm and will be preceded by a Concert Talk with UConn’s Dr. Glenn Stanley at 2:15 pm. Doors open at 2:00 pm.

The London-based ensemble will begin their all-Beethoven program with a rendition of Quartet in F Major, Op. 18, No. 1, a work in four movements. The powerfully expressive piece is one in a set of six quartets written by Beethoven from 1798 to 1800 after his multi-year study of the techniques of pioneering string quartet composer Franz Joseph Haydn. Following will be Quartet in C Major, Op. 59, No. 3, “Razumovsky”, a work commissioned by Prince Andrey Rasumovsky, Russian ambassador to Vienna. Written in 1806, with its glorious, triumphant finale, this quartet in four movements is considered by many to be one of Beethoven’s most radiant works. The afternoon of unforgettable music will conclude with Quartet in A Minor, Op. 132, a work in five movements composed in 1825. Reflecting the aging composer’s emotional journey while convalescing from a debilitating illness contracted in the spring of that year, the composition has been described by one critic as “beginning ominously with a series of dark, uncertain notes, then traveling through paths of pain and suffering – eventually triumphing in sunlight”.

Co-founded in 1998 by second violinist Donald Grant and cellist Marie Bitlloch, and later joined by first violinist Sara Bitlloch (Marie’s sister) and violist Martin Saving, the Elias is internationally acclaimed as one of the leading ensembles of their generation. Known for their intense and vibrant performances, the quartet has travelled the globe collaborating with some of the finest musicians and playing in the world’s great halls. 2015 saw them complete their groundbreaking Beethoven Project: performing and recording the complete string quartets of Beethoven in six albums, available through UK’s Wigmore Hall Live label.

“It was almost as though Beethoven’s deafness set him free,” said Elias co-founder Grant. “You might assume the opposite would happen, but it didn’t. It just made everything bigger. It made his whole world bigger.”

The Elias String Quartet was chosen to participate in BBC Radio 3’s New Generation Artists’ Scheme 2009-11 and was the recipient of a 2010 Borletti-Buitoni Award. They were awarded the 2010 BBC Music Magazine’s Newcomer of the Year Award and were nominated in 2013 and 2014 for an RPS Award and in 2014 for an Australian Art Music Award. In 2013 they were awarded a Mentoring Scholarship from the Beethoven-Haus in Bonn. They received 2nd prize and the Sidney Griller Prize at the 9th London String Quartet Competition.

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ELIAS STRING QUARTET, continued

The Quartet takes its name from Mendelssohn’s oratorio, *Elijah*, of which *Elias* is the German form. The group formed at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester where members worked closely with the late Dr. Christopher Rowland and later became Junior Fellows and Associate Quartet.

For more information about the Elias String Quartet please visit [www.eliastringquartet.com](http://www.eliastringquartet.com).
For more information about The Beethoven Project please visit [www.thebeethovenproject.com](http://www.thebeethovenproject.com).

This year the University of Connecticut’s Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts proudly celebrates its 60th anniversary. Established in December of 1955, Jorgensen has grown to become the largest college-based presenting program in New England. Each season Jorgensen enriches the lives of students, faculty, staff, and area residents with 30 to 35 diverse performances from nationally and internationally acclaimed artists and ensembles ranging from classical music to world music and dance, classical ballet and contemporary dance, comedy, family programming, and contemporary entertainment. Dedicated to University of Connecticut president Albert N. Jorgensen, Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts continues to follow his vision of the University as the state’s educational and cultural leader.

Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts is located at 2132 Hillside Road on the UConn campus in Storrs. Tickets are available now online. Prices are: Floor seats - $36, Mezzanine - $32.

For tickets and information, call the Box Office at 860.486.4226, Monday through Friday, 10 am - 5 pm, and 90 minutes prior to events, or order online at [jorgensen.uconn.edu](http://jorgensen.uconn.edu). Convenient $5 event parking is available in the North Garage. Free parking is available in Lots 9, F, and L. For a detailed parking map, go to [park.uconn.edu](http://park.uconn.edu).